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TERMS SENATE
UNIT'S CIA PLEA
AS POPPYCOCKRussell Raps Foreign
Relations Group

BY PHILIP DODD

(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, May 16 — Sen. Richard B. Russell [D., Ga.] said today that the Senate foreign relations committee's arguments for being represented on a central intelligence agency watchdog committee were "pure poppycock."

Russell is chairman of the Senate armed services committee, No. 2 Democrat on the Senate appropriations committee, and head of a semi-secret group of senior members of those two committees who pass on CIA money requests hidden in the budgets of other agencies.

Committee Schedules Vote

The Senate foreign relations committee, irked at being left out of CIA deliberations, has scheduled a vote tomorrow on a proposal to create an official nine-member Senate committee to oversee the CIA and other intelligence activities. It wants three of its own members on the proposed body.

One argument put forward in the foreign relations committee has been that the CIA acts in the field of foreign policy.

"Pure poppycock," Russell told the Senate today, touching off an hour-long debate on the CIA watchdog proposal. On the surface, it looked like another

Senate committee, but the debate took other turns.

Russell Predicts Result

Russell said that broadening the congressional discussion of CIA matters and enlarging the number of lawmakers privy to the agency's secret operations would cause the CIA's informants to "close up like clams" and hamper the agency's foreign espionage activities.

The same would apply to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's operations, which would come under the aegis of the proposed committee, Russell said.

Sen. John Stennis [D., Miss.], an armed services committee member, said it was a mistake to debate CIA matters "here or in committee." The existing Russell subcommittee was the best way to handle this delicate matter, he said.

"Should Remain There"

Sen. Leverett Saltonstall [R., Mass.], ranking Republican member of the armed services committee, said the CIA, as a major national security agency, was put under the armed services committee by the 1947 congressional reorganization act and should remain there.

Chairman J. W. Fulbright [D., Ark.] of the foreign relations committee said he viewed the watchdog committee proposal as "a very modest approach" and that it merely would clarify congressional authority over the intelligence agency.

Russell took issue with newspaper reports that the CIA "screened" members of the Senate group which now considers CIA matters.

Denies It's True

"The CIA has no more to do with screening the members of our committee than it has to do with writing editorials for the New York Times," Russell said. "We follow the rules of seniority rigidly. . . . I am very proud of the fact that there never has been a leak of testimony before this committee."

"Your subcommittee has distinguished itself by permitting no leaks," said Sen. Frank J. J. Lausche [D., O.J.]. "The Senate foreign relations committee has distinguished itself by the number of leaks it has permitted."

"The gentleman is a member of the foreign relations committee," Russell said of Lausche. "I can understand how he feels."